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FIFTY-NINTH EXHIBITION OF THE
NATIONAL ACADEMY OF DESIGN.

BY MARY GAY HUMPHREYS.

THE annual exhibition of the Academy of Design has been further anticipated this year by the offer of the Clarke and Hallgarten prizes. The conditions which attend these prizes, particularly that of Mr. Thomas B. Clarke, have given a certain zeal to the exhibition which is curiously interesting, and affords data for generalization at which speculatively one would not arrive. Mr. Clarke offered three hundred dollars for the best American figure composition painted in the United States—and the last two words are given the emphasis of especial type—and has excluded academicians from the competition. The late Mr. Julius Hallgarten, in offering three prizes of three hundred, two hundred, and one hundred dollars respectively, to be awarded to the three best pictures in oil colors, admits the landscape painters, but limits the competition to painters

to be harsh and cold. Those charms it has for the observer arises from its truthfulness to certain phases as we are accustomed to think it, but which the united testimony of three men in the trustworthiness of whose powers of observation we put faith, tempts us to believe, must be more habitual.

It is interesting to consider with these the Dutch realists who have in a way pursued the same *genre* in a different manner. The gross humor of the Dutchman is in keeping with a theory of life which does not belong to our more introspective age, but that is neither here nor there. The bloated body of a Dutch boor, or a pot house quarrel is portrayed with the most unrelenting realism, but even a painter as uncompromising as Brower chooses the happiest setting and the most agreeable light for his art, and makes his very loathsomeness a joy to the eye. This the painter of American *genre* of the new school does not attempt. The intellectual character of his work is his first thought, and some stern theory of fidelity holds him to his facts.

The "Land of Promise," by Mr. Charles F

and distinctly. The room is barren except of a stove and a deal table, and its occupants and the things inanimate are so finely rendered that the polish of the table, seen in the glare light through the windows, claims almost too much from the rest of the picture. The old women in their blue uniform are ranged around the room sewing, and two sociably gossiping over a cup of tea, and their yarn-winding are brought into prominence, but not sufficient to make the human interest the first consideration.

"How it Happened," by Mr. M. A. Woolf, has more anecdotal importance. Mr. Woolf's skill as an illustrator long since established his power as a story teller. In the present work an Irish woman is recounting to her friends and their progeny the woes of a small boy standing by her side, his arm ostentatiously in a sling. A gentle humor pervades the picture; the types are perfect and most skillfully rendered. There is also most clever differentiation in the first and second generations, and one infers the influence of the common schools. The painter's work is not as striking as in the two canvases already mentioned, and indicates that Mr. Woolf is a cleverer



SUNDAY AT THE PICTURE GALLERY. FROM A GERMAN MAGAZINE.

under thirty-five years of age, and stipulates, as does Mr. Clark, that the works be painted in the United States.

While the competition may have been in the first place wide enough, it is, in fact, narrowed down to some half dozen men, and these give character to the exhibition, since they assert a new and dominant element.

If we do not credit these men with greater sincerity of purpose than the older men, nor with greater technical knowledge than that which distinguished the brilliant entry of the younger men a few years ago, they still wear their knowledge and declare their purpose in a more individual manner.

And yet, while thinking for the moment of Messrs. Ulrich, Miller, and Woolf, the word individual seems badly chosen, for these three distinctly mark a class.

The conditions of the Clarke prize stipulate an American figure subject, but each of these men has been identified before with home topics. The present works are only more important in kind. Setting aside the personal equation, there are noteworthy points of resemblance in their work. Each of the men finds his sources of picturesqueness in humble life, and he finds its local color

Ulrich, is a view of the interior of Castle Garden after the arrival of an emigrant ship. The well-known types are introduced with discrimination and set down with that directness of intention and skill of hand with which Mr. Ulrich has already made us so favorably acquainted. What imagination the painter has given to his work is centered in the figure of a fair-haired Swede with her child on her breast seated on her box in the foreground. There is an anxious look on her face, and her absorption renders her unconscious of the scrutiny of a burly German smoking his pipe with Teutonic gravity. This little episode, which gives the canvas its only touch of sympathy, is scarcely carried far enough to take the work out of the prosaic atmosphere of things that are. Otherwise "The Land of Promise" is one of the signal works of the exhibition, and an earnest not so much of the present as the future.

Mr. Francis Miller, the painter of "The Charity Home," is even less concerned about beguiling us, except with a strikingly clear representation of the interior of an old ladies' home, its inmates and its immaculate neatness seen in the strong cool morning light. Whatever sympathy there is in the picture inheres in the subject, but all the artist has intended is given forcibly

student of the humanities than of technics. "Puzzled," by Mr. Louis Moeller, belongs to this group of probable prize compositions, and is the most complete, if less ambitious, than the others. There is but one figure, that of a man, with the paraphernalia of wisdom about him in globes and books. His brow is knitted, and his attitude expresses the nervous impatience of the man of learning. One feels a half comical sympathy for his embarrassment, and thus far the subject accomplishes the artist's evident intention. In the treatment there is the restraint of a man who has his resources in hand. Nothing is insisted on, but nothing lacks. A less important work, but in the same category, that should be mentioned, is "The Capmaker" of Mr. Henry Alexander; a workman by a window in which cold light between two tall buildings reflected from the opposite wall is faithfully reproduced.

Mr. Winslow Homer's "Life Line," which is outside of the competition, is, by far, the most important picture of the exhibition. It is the most important, not so much because its aims are higher, but because it aims at them.

Through the gale are dimly seen the shrouds of the helpless ship. Along the life line a man bravely holding in his arms the unconscious form

of a woman. Mr. Homer has in him too much of the painter, pure and simple, to give fine names to his ideas, and if we find in the Life Line the apostrophe of heroism, and the tribute of strength to weakness, we are not insensible to the difficult task his brush attempts. Since Mr. Homer exhibited his "Snapping the Whip," the rendering of motion has been one of his most constant studies. It is that which he so finely does in the Life Line. We feel the tremendous force of an angry sea. The wave forms are cut with the crispness of a knife. There is in them that sculptured look which every one must have noticed who has observed a great volume of water in action. The air is full of the fury of the storm. The wind has rent in strips the slender covering of the woman's form and envelops the man's face. There is extreme nicety of observation in all that relates to the story, and in the discrimination of the textures which belong to the man and to the woman, the buttons of whose shoes even are given their perfect value.

Mr. Frank Millet, whose "Regina Convivie" is, next to Mr. Homer's work, the most notable painting exhibited, is also out of both competitions. During the past few years Mr. Millet has presented a series of small works, classic in subject, and distinguished by their refinement, color, and poetic feeling. The present work continues them in a far more important manner.

if one strives to understand the idiosyncrasies of the Hanging Committee, it seems to have endeavored to give each room some of the best works, an intention which must have been laudable at the moment.

By the side of Mr. Crane's landscape hangs "The Winnowers" of Mr. Edward Simmons, a strong, serious, and in its way dramatic work. In the west room Mr. Shirlaw's "Gossips" are almost decorative canvases, and Mr. David Neal's "Visit of Oliver Cromwell to John Milton" make pendants, and between them over the door is the picturesque view of old houses on a Dutch canal by Mr. Boggs, and opposite, similarly placed out of vision, Mr. George Maynard's symbolic "Aurora." Mr. Boggs' canvas may be particularly regretted, because it is an example of that sort of compromise between literalness and decorative feeling which results in picture making.

The corridor has been especially distinguished by Mrs. Chadwick's "Fisherman's Return," a large work executed in a large way, and in Miss Dodson's academic study, "Bacidor," a painting which would be hung more worthily in the salon to which Miss Dodson is a contributor.

Here also is the portrait of Jefferson as Bob Acres, by Mr. J. W. Alexander, a stage picture the verisimilitude of which every one who has seen it beyond the footlights will appreciate. In the east room Mr. George Edwards and Mr.

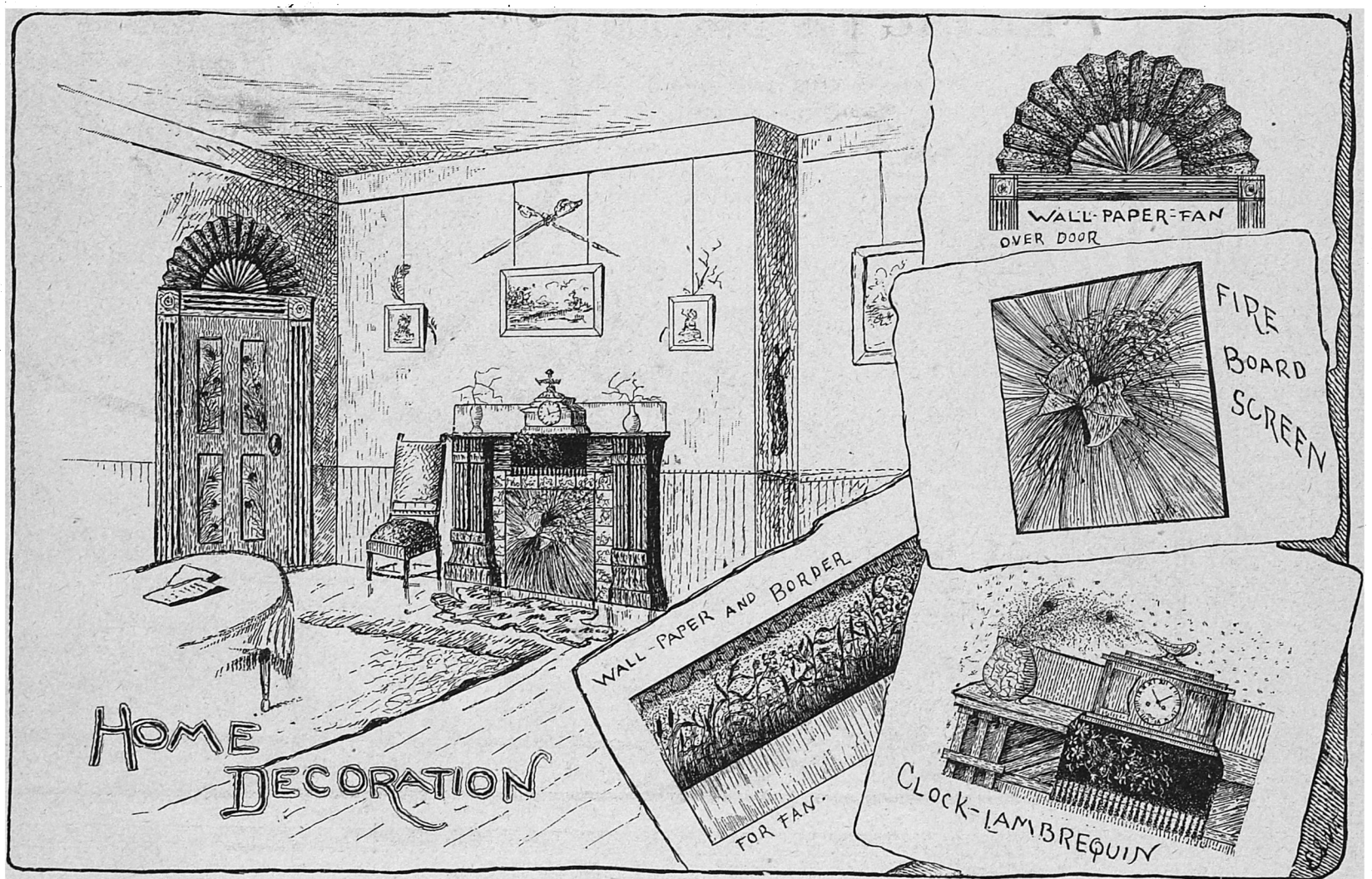
which, with the "Adagio," by Mr. Fred. H. Freer, and Hamilton Hamilton's "Jump, Sir," make an interesting trio. There is comparatively little in still life which calls for notice, and among these may be mentioned "The Flowers," by Miss Booth, and "Fresh Roasted," a startling study of peanuts by J. Decker, a new name.

HOME DECORATION.

To make a fire screen as shown in the design, have a light frame to fit the fire-place, cover it with muslin for a foundation. To ascertain the quantity needed for the outside, measure the frame around the outer edge and allow a half more than it measures for fullness. Take the straight edge of the goods and tack it in plaits on the back; then draw it over to the front and down to the centre, sew it firmly in place, and fasten a large bunch of grasses in the middle tied with a bow of broad satin ribbon.

The material used can be either satin or silesia; the former, of course, will make a handsomer one, but silesia will look very well. Cat tails can be used instead of grasses.

The peacock feathers, seen on door panels greatly improve the appearance of a plain door. Cut pieces of satin the size of door panels and tack them in places, by means of the smallest



The slender low-crowned figure, whose soft white draperies suggest her pliant form holding up the rose which speaks of silence, is delicately and practically conceived. If she is not the maiden of the hearthstone, she is also not the spirit of revelry. The color of the work is based on the variations of whites in the clinging textures of the draperies and the marble floor and background, and accented by the brighter hued roses. The sympathy between the composition and color is complete and refers the work to a class of ideal subjects which, if few painters now essay, still fewer accomplish without unwholesome sentimentality.

Comparatively few landscape painters seem to have special reference to the Hallgarten prize, to which only they are eligible. Mr. Bolton Jones sends two large canvases, "Through the Willows" and "On Herring Run." Each of these are most careful works. The latter is not unlike those landscapes in which two seasons embrace; that Mr. Jones has already shown appeals strongly to his brush.

"The Waning Year," by Mr. Bruce Crane, is the most important landscape he has yet exhibited, and suggests no forerunner. Each contribution of Mr. Crane shows what a sincere student of nature in its various phases he is, and how much more self-reliant he is becoming. The picture is badly hung in the northwest room, but

Thomas Allen are both above the doors. Mr. Allen, who is the most important contributor of cattle in landscape, being especially badly placed. In the west room is Mr. Alden Weir's large work "Mother and Child," in which the perfection of the cradle is a bit perplexing.

The younger Morans are both represented by pictures which appeal to the eye with varied charms. "An Old Time Melody," by Percy Moran, is full of light and is a graceful airy rendering of feminine loveliness, while "The Duel" of Leon Moran is delicate in color, and the story is told with well-directed intention.

There are comparatively few portraits, that of the Secretary of the Treasury, by Mr. Eastman Johnson, being the most important. There are a number of works which, to mention, would only be to recall past exhibitions.

Mr. J. G. Brown's "Boys and Dog" keep delighted groups about them. Mr. Guy has a study of a child by firelight on its mother's lap, with reflections from her red dress which only needs more imaginative feeling to give it the importance it deserves.

Mr. W. H. Lippencott has an interim with portraits of children that is so good one wishes it better. "Retaliation," by Mr. F. S. Church, is a charming conceit, but expressed in no wise different from his other works in kind. There is a small canvas, "Consolation," by J. H. Caliga,

tacks so as not to mar the door; finish around the edge with furniture gimp and tack the feathers in place.

The most economical and artistic way of using up bits of wall paper and bordering is shown in the design for the arrangement of fan for over the door, which at a distance has really a beautiful and striking effect. The lower part is made of some plain color to represent the sticks, and the body of the fan is formed of bordering or bits of bright wall paper.

After joining, the paper and border should be seventeen inches wide and two yards long; now beginning at the side, it is folded in plaits two and a half inches wide, then draw out and tack it in place. The size of the clock lambrequin is governed by the clock for which it is intended. The one given here is made of plush with a spray of passion flowers embroidered in silk. Of course any material can be used, and the work on it may be as elaborate as one fancies; line it with silesia, the color of the outside. It is not necessary to fasten it on the mantel, as the clock will keep it in place.

YELLOW is not a color that can be used in masses unless it be much broken or mingled with other colors, and even then it wants some material to help it out, which has great play of light and shade in it.